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NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
9 July 1985

NATIONS CLOAKED

'Spy money' trial to use secret code

West Palm Beach, Fla. (UPI)—A federal judge yesterday granted a government request to conceal the names of foreign countries that may arise in the trial of a retired Air Force general charged with embezzling "spy money" he was assigned to manage.

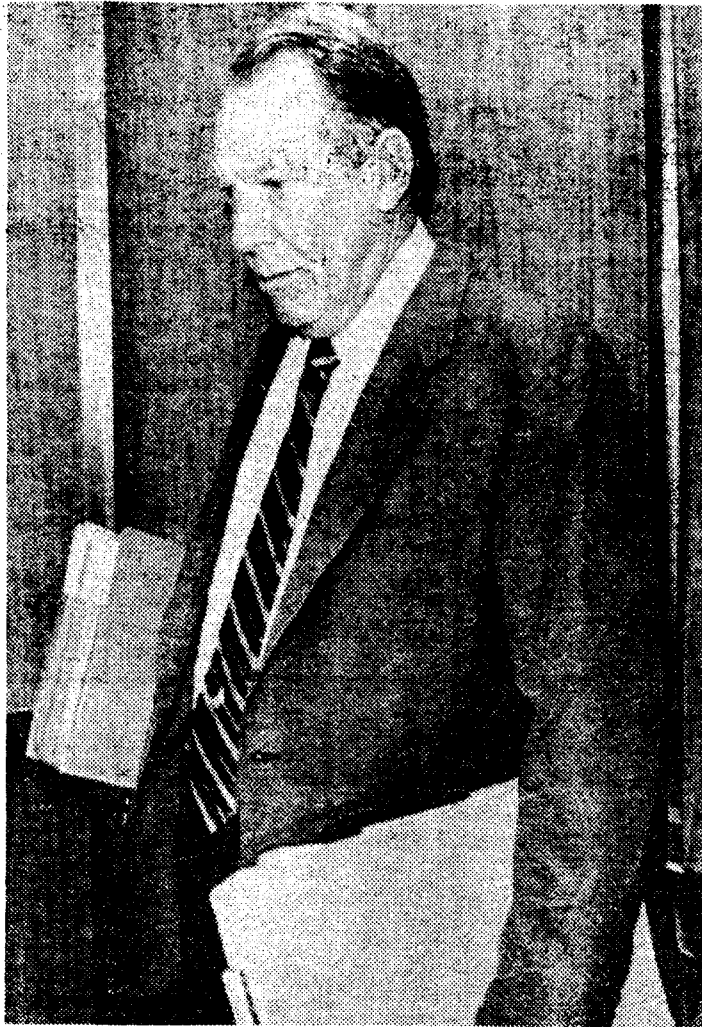
Maj. Gen. Richard Collins, a former aide to Gen. Alexander Haig, the NATO supreme commander, has threatened to divulge national secrets during the trial about the use of U.S. funds to bankroll covert CIA operations in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. Collins claims the information will prove his innocence.

At one time, Collins was assigned to manage the government's "spy money" in Europe. He is accused of embezzling money and diverting it to his personal account, and of receiving \$19,000 in interest from his account.

A JURY of nine women and three men was impaneled to consider a six-count indictment alleging that Collins removed \$445,000 from a Swiss bank account and deposited the money in his own account. Collins, 55, maintains he was entitled to the money and that it was removed with the knowledge and consent of his superiors.

U.S. District Judge James Paine ruled during a pretrial hearing that the government may substitute letters for the names of foreign countries that arise during the trial.

Prosecutors said information about those countries was classified and might damage national security, but a defense attorney argued that the government's



Retired Maj. Gen. Richard Collins entering Florida court. AP

plan would depict Collins as a traitor to his country.

"I DON'T want the jury to think Gen. Collins is somehow a traitor in causing damage to our national security," said the attorney, Stephen Bronis.

If convicted on all six counts, Collins could be sentenced to up to 60 years in prison and would face \$60,000 in fines.

It took little more than

four hours for jury selection yesterday. Only 13 potential jurors and one potential alternate were excused after questioning by the judge.

The government excused one man who said he liked the movie "Rambo" and John Wayne films. The defense excused one woman whose husband works for General Dynamics, another woman who was employed by Du Pont and a woman who said she likes James Bond movies.